

Message Text

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64

ACTION EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6303

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRIDGETOWN 1478

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR BB

SUBJ: U.S. SUGAR QUOTA CUTS

REFS: (A) BRIDGETOWN 1461 (B) PORT OF SPAIN 5698

1. REACTION TO SUGAR QUOTA CUTS HEIGHTENED HERE WITH TWO NEWS BROADCASTS LAST NIGHT AND THIS MORNING TYING CUTS TO U. S. DISSATISFACTION WITH INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY PURSUED BY SOME OF CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES. BROADCASTS QUOTED CARIBBEAN CANE FARMERS ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT, NORMAN GIRWAR OF TRINIDAD, AS SAYING THAT QUOTA CUTS WERE PUNITIVE MEASURES TAKEN BY U.S. BECAUSE OF WEST INDIAN/ CARIBBEAN OVERTURES TO CUBA AND OTHER "INDEPENDENT" FOREIGN POLICY ACT*. TO BACK UP CHARGES, LOCAL BROADCASTS REPORTED "SHOCKING NEWS" THAT U. S. HAS NOT REPEAT NOT SEEN FIT TO APPLY SUGAR ACT TO SHORTFALL COUNTRIES OF PERU AND BOLIVIA WHICH ALLEGEDLY SOLD SUGAR ON WORLD MARKET WHEN THEY FAILED TO MEET U. S. QUOTA.

2. BARBADOS OFFICIALS OF WEST INDIES SUGAR ASSOCIATION (WISA) AND BARBADOS SUGAR PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION (BSPA)
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ARE AWARE OF FUROR QUOTA CUTS HAVE CREATED ELSEWHERE IN

THE CARIBBEAN BUT THEY WERE MOST UNSYMPATHETIC TO GIRWAR'S ALLEGED REMARKS. IISA PRESIDENT, RAY NORRIS, POINTING TO SUGAR INDUSTRY'S EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH EMBASSY, DEPARTMENT, AND USDA, TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER THAT, IF REMARKS CORRECT, "WISA WISHES TO DISSOCIATE ITSELF ABSOLUTELY FROM ANY STATEMENTS CHARACTERIZING QUOTA CUTS AS BEING POLITICALLY MOTIVATED." NORRIS ADDED THAT SUCH RASH ACCUSATIONS WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO HELP QUOTA RESTORATION EFFORTS IN 1975 WHEN SUGAR ACT COMES UP FOR REVISION. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, DSPA PRESIDENT ERSKINE WARD, UNLIKE GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEDIA, SEEMED WELL AWARE THAT QUOTA CUTS WERE PRIMARILY MATTER OF LAW AND MENTIONED LARGE PUERTO RICO QUOTA REDUCTION AS EVIDENCE THAT U.S. ACTION NOT POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. WARD WENT ON TO SAY THAT 1974 QUOTA CUTS WERE NOT OF MAJOR CONCERN HERE BECAUSE BARBADOS EXPECTS TO HAVE LITTLE SUGAR AVAILABLE FOR SALE TO U. S. AFTER COMMONWEALTH QUOTAS ARE MET. WARD DID EMPHASIZE THAT 1975 QUOTAS WOULD BE MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN AND VOICED OPTIMISM THAT CONGRESS WOULD RESTORE FULL QUOTA IN REVISED ACT THAT YEAR.

3. COMMENT: BROADCASTS MAY PROVOKE FURTHER PERHAPS HARSHER EDITORIAL AND OTHER REACTION THAN WE HAVE SEEN (REFERENCE A), BUT OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT QUOTA CUTS ARE NOT BURNING ISSUE HERE YET AS ELSEWHERE IN CARIBBEAN. GOB HAS NOT YET MADE ANY OFFICIAL APPROACH TO EMBASSY ON QUOTA ISSUE. IT WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL TO HAVE UP TO DATE INFORMATION TO COUNTER CHARGES THAT U. S. HAS OVERLOOKED SHORTFALLS IN OTHER INSTANCES. WITH THIS IN MIND, WE WOULD LIKE TO UNDERLINE EMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN'S REQUEST (PARA 3, REF. B) FOR DETAILS.
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